

**THE
CHILD'S FRIEND.**

VOL. 6.**JULY, 1846.****NO 4.**

ON ANIMALS.**THE CAT.**

I DOUBT not my young friends, especially the boys, will laugh when they see what is my subject ; they will say, "Can any one think it worth while to write about cats ? They are only domestic tigers ; they are treacherous creatures ; no one can trust them. The cat heart is radically bad ; they were made to be teased by boys and to catch rats and mice ; there is no good in them." Now if they are ever so bad, we deny that they ought ever to be teased ; none but the meanest spirited boy will ever be found tormenting a cat or any other animal. When a human being unnecessarily hurts an animal, be it ever so low in the scale of God's works, the animal is the highest being of the two ; but to such children, I am not now writing ; I am speaking to children who would do right to all, but have a cruel prejudice against the poor cats ; and I intend to treat the subject with as much

seriousness and respect, as if I were writing about any of my fellow creatures who were injured by what I consider an unjust prejudice.

We take it for granted cats have no love in them, and so we never act towards them as if they had any ; now I believe they have pretty good hearts in the main, and if they were treated with justice and kindness would be far more respectable members of society. As evidence that I have some reason for my faith, I will mention some facts I have heard, and some which I have witnessed about cats.

In the first place, the cat is accused of never caring for the inhabitants of a house, but only for the house itself. This is not always true of them, for I knew an affectionate cat who manifested much disturbance at the preparations for moving ; at last all was moved except herself and the cook ; the cook, in order to make sure that she should not escape from the carriage in which she was going to remove her, put her into a cage and fastened her in. When she arrived at the house, the cat walked quietly out of her cage, looked at her old friend the cook, went into another room where she met another friend, and began forthwith to purr her satisfaction. Two years afterwards this family moved again : as soon as the cat saw the preparations making for moving she showed great uneasiness and went down into the cellar where she remained during all the confusion ; when all else was gone, her old friend the cook went to the cellar stairs and called her : she came up directly ; she stroked her and showed her a basket just big enough to hold her, and said to her, “ Get in, get in, pussey, and take a pretty ride ;” the cat got in and allowed herself

without the least resistance to be tied down into the basket by a cloth placed over it; and as soon as she saw the different members of the family in the new house she manifested her contentment. The family moved again in six months; she again submitted herself and showed her preference to her friends over the house they lived in.

A cat has been known to nurse and bring up a rat with her own kittens. I once took a little rabbit who was starving to death from the neglect of its own mother, and placed it before this cat who preferred the people to the house. She had just come from nursing her kittens, and when she saw the little trembling rabbit before her, her first thought was evidently to make a good meal of it; but I took up the little thing and caressed it, and then put it down again; she now approached it in a motherly way, and looked at it; its ears seemed evidently to puzzle her; after awhile she tried to take it up as she did her kittens, but saw she could not safely; then she went to her nest and mewed, and then came to me and rubbed herself against me; and then went and licked the rabbit; I now ventured to put the rabbit in with her kittens, and she nursed it and took the best care of it.

A friend of mine who killed a squirrel not knowing that she had young ones, took all the young ones and brought them into the house, and put them before his pet cat who had lost all her kittens but one: she looked at them for a while; probably her cattish nature thought a little of eating them; but her better nature soon prevailed, for one after another she took them and carried them all to her nest, and proved a faithful nursing mother to them, and ere long there was no part of the house in

which the old cat and her roguish adopted children were not to be found.

What will not cats submit to from a loving child? I have seen a child lie down with a cat for its pillow, and the cat merely move herself a little so as to bear the weight as easily as possible. A cat can be taught to stand, and walk upon her hind legs, which seems at first very disagreeable to her, by a child it loves. I remember when I was a child seeing a Maltese cat come in every morning and wait till my father had finished his breakfast, and then at a certain signal she would stand upon her hind legs and beg for hers, and take just what was given her with the utmost propriety, asking for nothing more.

I will tell you a well authenticated anecdote of the cat I read the other day. A cat had been brought up in close friendship with a bird which, as we all know, is the favorite food of the cat. One day, however, she was seen suddenly to seize and hold in her claws her feathered companion, who happened to be out of the cage. The first thought of those who saw her was, that at last her tiger nature had come out, and that she was going to make a meal of her little trusting friend; but all the cat did was simply to hold the trembling bird still, and on looking round the room it was discovered that another cat had entered the room, and that this alarming act was only the means the friendly cat used to save the bird till the intruder should leave the room. As soon as the other cat was gone, she let go the bird, who it was found was not in the least hurt.

If you will turn back to the first number of the fourth volume of the Child's Friend, you will find an apparent-

ly well authenticated anecdote of a kitten, which shows this much abused animal is capable of such grateful love as we see little of in this world : in her case she could not survive the death of her benefactor, but died of grief.

One more story of a cat. A cat who had been petted and always kindly treated by a family of children, was present one day when the mother thought it necessary to strike one of them for some bad action ; the cat flew violently at the mother and tried to scratch her, and from that time she never could strike one of the children with impunity in the presence of their faithful, loving friend.

A friend related to me that they had a cat in her father's family who was a great favorite, and who was particularly fond of the baby of the family, that one day this child was very fretful, and sat for a long time on the floor crying, and that nothing would pacify her. The cat was by her side on the floor, and finding herself not noticed, and perhaps wearied at the noise, she suddenly stood up on her hind legs and boxed the child's ears in exactly the same way in which she was in the habit of boxing her kitten's. Apparently the moral nature of this cat was of a sterner character than that of the one before mentioned.

If love and kindness can produce such an effect upon so irritable an animal, what a lesson does it teach us all of their heavenly power, and if there is in its nature the capacity for such love, are we not bound to do all we can to encourage it. We have made them our slaves : we have taken them from the woods that we may have them to catch our rats and mice : we subject them to our wills and we are bound to do all we can to make their lives as comfortable as possible, to be as patient with their bad or

disagreeable qualities, and to encourage all their good ones. We can never know the true character of any creature, rational or irrational, till we treat it with entire justice and kindness. I therefore plead for the poor despised, abused, uncared for, ever suspected, calumniated cat. I well know she is disposed to be a little thievish now and then; that there are strong reasons for supposing her somewhat selfish, and that she may be justly suspected of occasional hypocrisy, and that she too easily uses her claws. These are all of them human as well as cattish faults; but if she has in her the capacity for something better, for generous and devoted love, then are we not bound in order to prove our title to a higher and better nature, and to show our true humanity, to treat her with such patient, enduring kindness and perfect justice as may bring out all that is good in her nature; in short, cannot we conquer her evil by our good? Let us try.

E. L. F.

M E M E N T O .

My son, be this thy simple plan:
Serve God and love thy brother man;
Forget not, in temptation's hour,
That sin lends sorrow double power;
Count life a stage upon thy way,
And follow conscience, come what may:
Alike with heaven and earth sincere,
With hand, and brow, and bosom clear,
"Fear God—and know no other fear."

P.

MARY ANNE, OR THE CLOISTER MAIDEN.

ABRIDGED AND TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF G. C. PFEFFEL.

[Concluded from last number.]

IN the latter part of August we left our rural residence to return to the city. Mary Anne's adieu to the parents of my wife and their daughters was most touching. I never heard gratitude expressed in more artless and eloquent language. Our way home led us through G—, where we passed a couple of days. Mary Anne expressed the greatest desire to visit her cloister, for the purpose of claiming from the nuns some trifles which she had left behind. I was pretty certain, however, that neither these effects, nor love for the holy sisters, towards whom, with the exception of the good Rosalie, she was quite indifferent, were the chief motives of this visit. She wished to exhibit herself to the nuns in her rose-colored finery; and as she was beginning to feel that her education had been neglected by them, she might have had the inclination to let them see her progress in knowledge.

My wife accompanied her to the cloister. Rosalie's reception of her was kind and affectionate. The other nuns, especially the Prioress, met her very frostily; the latter indeed, with a sort of contempt. Her air seemed to say, "You are now a child of the world and no longer fit to remain within our holy walls." Rosalie again gave Mary Anne some relics, for which the maiden expressed her thanks, but scarcely had she reached home when she divided the holy trinkets between my two children.

It was with great reluctance that Mary Anne returned to her boarding place, her wish being to remain in my fam-

ily ; but I told her, that it had been the express command of her protectress that she should reside among catholics ; though to gratify her as far as possible, I would give her full permission to pass all her afternoons with us. She availed herself of it so literally, that we saw her nearly every day, and I can say that at each visit we noticed some new ray of light from her dawning intellect, or some new trait of the excellence of her heart. To love and to be loved, was the most importunate craving of her soul. She often expressed it with all the captivating ingenuousness of a child of nature, and often with those blandishing caresses which after the example of her mates in the cloister, she had learned to lavish on the nuns in order to win their favor.

The way to the protestant church went past her dwelling-place. As soon as she heard the bell on Sunday she would begin to look out, and the moment she saw me or my wife she would come running towards us, like a child of six years old, and cry out when she was half way, "Good morning, dear uncle and aunt," and the salutation was always sealed with a kiss. I took the first opportunity to make her understand that such greetings were not quite suitable in the public street. "But why not," she replied, "they harm nobody, and no one would forbid me to salute my uncle or my aunt."

"Your affection is very dear to us," I replied, "and certainly can harm no one ; still, in cities, it is customary in offering salutations to do like others."

"A very silly custom," said she, "and I shall have to be reminded of it more than once, before I comply with it."

About fourteen days after our return from the country, I found her in my wife's apartment, where she was al-

ternately netting and playing with the children. In the course of conversation, a wedding happened to be mentioned. "I am going to be married very soon," said Mary Anne. "May I ask to whom?" "Oh yes, for you must and ought to know." "To whom then?" "To you." "Do you wish, my child, for the death of your kind aunt?" "I? Heaven forbid! Oh dear uncle, how could you imagine such a thing?" "I could do no less. Did you ever see a man who had two wives?" After a short pause—"I believe not." "I believe so too. Christians are forbidden to have two wives." Mary Anne said softly, "That is a pity." She then sprang towards my wife and fell on her neck—"Dear, dear aunt, do forgive me. I had not thought it over." A cordial sisterly kiss from her aunt pacified her.

The summer was ended; Mary Anne had now been absent from her cloister nearly four months, and showed every day a greater disinclination to return to it. She had enjoyed with us the pleasures of the vintage, and was present with my wife when I received a letter from my kinsman, in which he informed me that Mary Anne's grandfather, an old man seventy-five years of age, had met with a fall which endangered his life. The near approach of death had awakened his conscience, and inspired him with the resolution to declare Mary Anne to be his granddaughter, and recall her from banishment. For this purpose I was commissioned to inform her of the change in her fortunes,^{*} and prepare her to depart. The day was appointed on which a chambermaid of the old Countess would arrive at the town of G—, and I was requested to accompany Mary Anne thither.

I went immediately to my wife's apartment, where I found the good girl in full talk.

"I bring you," said I to her, "very agreeable news." She came forward to meet me. "Ah! am I to have a watch?" She had often begged me to buy her one. "My news is of much more consequence," I answered, "you are to return, my child, to your father-land and your relations."

"Do you go with me, dear uncle?" "No, I am not desired to do so, and it would be inconvenient besides." "Then I will not go." "Sit down by me, my young friend, and attentively listen to me. It gives me the purest pleasure to be able to tell you, that you have a mother, a grandmother and grandfather. The latter is old and sick, and wishes to see you before his death." Mary Anne repeated with seriousness, "a mother, grandmother and grandfather?"

"Yes, my child, and your grandmother is the Countess of —, who has so long been your benefactress. A fortune awaits you of which you have hitherto had no idea. You may promise yourself many valuables beside a watch." "It may be, dear uncle, but I will not go." "Why not, my child? You must know that a chamber-maid of your grandmother's is already on the way to receive you, and I could not detain you here even if I would."

Mary Anne wept bitterly. "Ah! dear uncle, I want no watch, and no valuables, I will stay here with you and my aunt." "You may always call us by those sweet names, but you must know that we are not related to you. Your mother and your grandparents are in N—, and now wish to have you with them."

After a silence of some moments, Mary Anne said in an exceedingly mournful, but firm tone, "Dear uncle,

these people do not love me, else why have they left me nearly seventeen years without telling me what they were to me? My grandmother has indeed, shown me much kindness; but has she ever once written to me, or allowed me to say that I was her grandchild?"

"She may have had reasons for it which she will now reveal to you." "What reason could there be? I do not believe it." She wept anew. "Ah! dear uncle, I cannot, will not go. I will remain here." She then turned to my wife, "O my kind aunt, do keep me; keep me, I will wait on you, I will be your children's maid."

This scene rent our hearts. We could not speak, but held the poor child in our arms. At last I said to her, "Go with us, my dear. We will accompany you to G—. And if you should not be happy with your family, and should express the desire to return to us, I solemnly promise you that I will ask your grandmother's permission to receive you into our house as a friend and sister." I then accompanied her to her lodgings, to communicate the intelligence which had been received, and request Madame A— to have every thing in readiness for Mary Anne's departure, which was to take place in three days. The next day I proposed to her that she should make some farewell calls with my wife. Mary Anne behaved with tolerable composure until the moment when she took leave of my venerable mother, whom she had been accustomed to call "grandmama," with my children. She passed her last night at my house, and the next morning we started early for G—.

At M—, a village about three miles and a half from G—, where we stopped to dine, we were met by the sister-in-law of my relative, in company with a well

dressed woman, but of a most masculine appearance. Her companion introduced her as the waiting woman of the Countess, who was to receive from us Mary Anne, the lady Von B——. At table Mary Anne ate little and said nothing, but alternately pressed our hands. The duenna chid her sensibility in the roughest manner. "What is the use, miss, of all this fretting? I will soon teach you to have done with it." I gave her to understand that she must check her impatience, and address Mary Anne with kind words. "We shall see," she replied, and so passed the meal. A walk was proposed in the garden behind the inn, after dinner; Mary Anne drew me to a retired corner, seized both my hands, and said in a solemn tone, "Dear uncle, you have always been my friend, you have never refused my request, and surely you will not refuse my last one." I promised to do for her whatever I could. "I am afraid of this woman, and still more of my relations. Depend upon it this journey will be my ruin. Oh my dear uncle, you must deliver me. Kill me, for God's sake." Thus speaking, she dropped down on her knees and drew from beneath her apron a knife, that she had taken unperceived from the table, which she put into my hands. I threw it from me, lifted the half frantic creature from the ground, and drew her towards the house.

She suffered herself to be brought in without speaking a word. The paroxysm of despair had passed, and was succeeded by the deepest languor. I have never since beheld that apartment without a shudder. I need not say, that the remainder of our journey was most sad. We arrived at G——, and took supper with Mary Anne and her duenna. The evening was very tedious, and

yet we dreaded the hour which was to separate us. During the repast, some words escaped from the duenna which filled me with doubt—she talked about the *plan* of her journey, and spoke of waiting at A—, a city fourteen miles from G—, until she should receive further orders. Fortunately Mary Anne was not attending and did not appear to understand these intimations. I drew her apart and said in a low tone to her, “ You must first of all things, promise me on your word of honor, as in the presence of God, never to give yourself up to the despair which you manifested to-day at noon.” Mary Anne sighed and answered, “ Yes, I promise.” I pressed her hand to my heart and continued, “ Now, my dear friend, I have something else to say to you. I have never deceived you and should think it a crime to begin to do so now. I must separate from you. It is impossible for me, I assure you, to remain with you any longer ; farewell, my dear good child. May God bless you ! Love us always, and as long as I live I shall be your friend.” Mary Anne was speechless ; I clasped her in my arms, and beckoned to my wife to take leave of her at the same time. She came forward and embraced her with the tenderness of a sister ; Mary Anne remained speechless. We proceeded toward the door. Mary Anne made a few steps to follow us and sank fainting on the floor. We commended her with tears to the astonished waiting woman, who now on her part showed some commiseration ; and upon our homeward journey we spoke only to confer upon the suspicions which her mysterious expressions had excited in us. We could not but fear that our relative in N— had deceived us, and that the alleged illness of the old Count, concerning which

the waiting woman spoke with great indifference, had been only a pretext for withdrawing her from our hands. To this conjecture was added another, namely, that our friendship for the poor girl had excited the Prioress of her cloister to urge the bigoted grandmother to withdraw her granddaughter from the bosom of heretics. It is more probable, however, that the mother of Mary Anne, who had now married a major in the army, and the old Count were at the bottom of the plan.

Immediately upon my return home, I wrote to my relative a detailed account of all the circumstances attending Mary Anne's removal from us, entreating him to lay it before her grandparents ; but to this letter I never received an answer. On the following day I received a most tender letter from Mary Anne, dated from G—, telling me that she was to commence her journey the next day, and that the waiting woman treated her more kindly. Her expressions of gratitude were as simple as they were tender, and not an individual in my family was omitted in her salutations. The style was very careless ; the handwriting tolerable, but the spelling wretchedly faulty. She promised to write to me after her arrival in N—, but I received not a line from her. I wrote to her but obtained no answer. I made inquiries after her of my relative, who told me that he had never seen her, and that the family kept her place of residence secret. This uncertainty tortured us. I could no longer doubt that the unfortunate girl had been made a sacrifice ; and the thought that she might consider me as having been an accomplice in consigning her to misery, often harassed me through whole nights ; and more than once the sweet martyr came before me in dreams, reproaching

me for my cruelty, not in cutting words, but in those soft, tender tones which were natural to her, and which I have never heard repeated in another. In about three years my relative was recalled from the embassy at the — court, and the intelligence which he then communicated to me was in no way adapted to relieve my heart. He said that Mary Anne continued for a time at N—, but ere long disappeared ; and he had been informed on good authority that she had entered the service of a clergyman in F—, as a maid servant, where she had been seen scouring the floors. My heart was broken at these tidings, and I resolved to leave no means untried for learning the fate of this innocent victim, and convincing her at any cost of my own innocence. I recollect a friend of my youth who was now attached to an embassy at the — court. I applied to him with urgent entreaties that he would procure for me precise intelligence concerning the poor girl. His inquiries succeeded. He informed me that Mary Anne had been for some time in the cloister of R—, not as a nun, which her shattered state of health forbade, but as a boarder, and he most kindly offered to transmit to her a letter from me. I replied instantly, enclosing a few lines to Mary Anne, in which I merely informed her that I had written to her many times since our separation, and inquired after her of her family, but had never received an answer—that I had not expected to find her in a cloister—that our friendship for her had not been weakened by time or distance, and that I should never be easy until I had received an answer from her.

This letter my friend gave to a female confidant, who handed it to Mary Anne at the grate. She had scarcely

opened it when she began to weep bitterly. "For God's sake, good woman," she said to the bearer, "for God's sake, come tomorrow at this time, and I will give you an answer." On the following day the woman appeared at the cloister. Scarcely had the door-keeper seen her, when she called to her to pack off, if she did not wish for a beating, as the accursed letter which she had yesterday brought to the lady, had made her do nothing since but weep and moan, and that she was now obliged to keep her bed.

To this news my friend added the request that I would hereafter excuse him from undertaking any such commissions, as they were absolutely useless, and might expose him to many disagreeable consequences.

In about two years my friend returned from his embassy, and when he had heard from me all the particulars of Mary Anne's story, more at large than I had been able to impart them by letter, he offered to open a communication for me with her, by means of one of his female friends in the metropolis. I availed myself of his proposal with the liveliest joy. I wrote to Mary Anne. My letter was framed in a manner not to excite her feelings too powerfully. Fortunately it came into her hands, and in fourteen days I received an answer. But, Heavens ! what an answer ! She indeed manifested delight at the new evidence of my remembrance of her, but with it also the evident decay of her intellect. She adjured me to come to R——, to rescue her from the cloister and help her to find her father. On the next page she declared I was her father, and implored me to acknowledge and no longer repulse her. She then painted to me her situation. Her grandparents were dead, her

mother appeared to have forgotten her, and her health was irretrievably lost. "I have," she said, "frequent convulsions, though I am not yet dead." And finally, she solicited of me alms.

I replied to her through the same channel. I put her in mind of our first acquaintance and the proofs I had given her of my friendship ; also of the moment of our separation, and I expressed the wish that I were indeed her father, that I might have the power to deliver her. I reminded her that I was scarcely fourteen years older than herself, and that I had never known an individual of her relatives. I told her who had been her real father, and related all I had ever heard of him. I added a small present which I was unable, alas ! to repeat as often as I could have wished, and which was always increased by the lady who conveyed to her my letters. After this she wrote to me at various times. Her letters breathed the warmest tenderness and gratitude, and were less confused than the first one ; for though she still sometimes called me her father, it seemed because I was the only friend she had in the world. In one of her last she mentioned the decease of her mother, who had died of a lingering and painful disease, without attempting to relieve the mournful situation of her daughter by the smallest donation from her own abundance.

How I longed to know that poor Mary Anne's sufferings were at an end ! But she continued to live on ; and thus one of the best of human beings, from her birth through her earthly course, continued the victim of prejudice and cruelty, experiencing but one brief cessation from suffering, which rendered her subsequent trials only the more intolerable, and allowed no alleviation

of her misery to the last breath of her life. Uniting as she did the tenderest affections with the purest heart and deepest sensibility to every physical and mental pain, she has been to me the loudest and most convincing preacher of immortality. As surely as there is a God, there must be a better world, where Mary Anne will be compensated, and, as Abraham says of Lazarus, *comforted!* This truth can in my estimation be undermined by no philosophy and no metaphysics; without it there could be no pleasure in friendship, as we should cease to anticipate its eternal duration.

At length Mary Anne's release arrived, after a long and martyr-like struggle. Her sufferings increased with every year. My friend C— visited her in the year 1794, when on a journey to M—. He found her emaciated, bowed double, and resembling a shadow. Her memory was so impaired that she had but a dim recollection of me. To this circumstance even more than to the war, of which Mary Anne's native land was frequently the theatre, I imputed the total interruption of her correspondence during the last years of her life. I only learned from time to time that she was still living. Her sad existence was prolonged until the beginning of the present century. She died in the spring of 1801.

Peace be to her ashes!"

L. O.

If light is the universal means by which the outward universe becomes manifest to its different parts, so the principle of love is the universal language of the spiritual world. And our own heart initiates us into these two universal languages.

C. FOLLEN.

DEAR MEMORIES OF LITTLE CARO.

"Childhood is an open book, on whose unstained pages
angels write beautiful truths."

I KNEW a pleasant little girl,
Her name was Caroline ;
She was the youngest child of five,
In a Sabbath-class of mine.

Her presence was a pure delight,
She was so fair and good ;
I know not if I loved her most
In grave or playful mood.

Her merry voice was blithe and free
As singing birds in May ;
Her eyes were like the harebell blue,
And open as the day.

Her sunny hair, in ringlets free,
Over her shoulders fell ;
While all her little artless ways
Some tale of grace could tell.

Sometimes she wore the "Grecian braids"
Plaited with nicest care ;
With an arch smile, and cunning look
"Classic" she said they were.

Four summers only had she seen,
Yet she could read as well
As many children I have known,
Who twice her years could tell.

She 'd often leave a noisy play,
To read some book in verse ;
And many songs, and ballads long,
She could with ease rehearse.

Her childish lore I sought to know,
And asked " if she could tell
Who was the mother of dear Christ
Who loved us all so well ? "

The answer came in sweetest tones,
While she looked up and smiled,
" He was the Virgin Mary's Son,
A meek and lovely child."

One day she climbed upon my knee,
" The Child's Friend " in her hand,
Her innocent and winning ways
My heart could not withstand.

The while she read with accent free,
With look and tone of love,
A legend, Catholic and old,
Of " Jesus and the Dove."

When first she read this pretty tale,
She asked with earnest tone,
" Is this *our* Jesus ? Father, say,
The same, the very one ? "

Her father said, " It is the same,
The Holy Christ, my dear,
And to my little girl I hope
He may be always near."

May children all who read these lines,
When they're older grown,
With pure and loving hearts *still* claim
Dear Jesus for their *own*!

S. F. P.

MERLIN.

A MINSTREL'S TALE.

DID my readers ever attempt to imagine what it would be to have no books? Consider what a place they hold in our lives, what a large part of our knowledge and our happiness we derive from them, how the knowledge of one generation is preserved and handed down in them to the next; and think of their numbers, of the time that men spend in writing and reading them, and above all think how precious some good books are to us, how much wiser and better they make us—and then imagine that all the books in the world were destroyed, or at least that all that were left were a few written ones, in a strange language, which not one man in a thousand could read. How different everybody's life would be in such a case! Yet this was the case but a few hundred years ago, for you know that printing was not invented till the middle of the fifteenth century, about the time this country was discovered. Before that, as you may suppose, everybody's life was very different. Let me try to give you some idea of the state of England in those times, for it is to them that my story belongs. We live in a country filled with towns and villages of comfortable

houses, and well dressed people. The poorest farmer's boy can read and write, and most children learn to do a great deal more. In every town there are shops filled with every thing to make life comfortable. Along the coast are great cities whose harbors are filled with ships engaged in commerce with every corner of the globe. We live in warm and comfortable houses, with glass windows and stoves, and every village has its schools. All this is true of our country, and most of it of England, though in England, as the rich are much richer, so the poor are far more numerous and far more ignorant and wretched than any people in this country except our slaves. Still England has all the things I have enumerated as well as we. Yet four hundred and five hundred years ago, they had almost none of them. Then a great part of the island was covered with forests. If you travelled through one of these forests, you would come, not to some peaceful town or village, but to some castle with its high towers and battlements and deep ditch and huge arched gateway, such as remain to this day, some in ruins, and some repaired, and altered to be fit to live in now. Here dwelt the knight or lord. Perhaps you would see him riding forth over the drawbridge of his castle in complete armor of steel, with his host of soldiers and retainers, armed with spear and sword, and shield, their horses prancing, and their flags fluttering in the breeze. Perhaps he is going forth to some war, to gain renown by deeds of bravery, or to some neighboring tournament—even then to fight. For war is the occupation and amusement of his life. Down below the castle walls, you might see a little village of miserable hovels, occupied by the wretched peasants who tilled the land—they were all the farmers there were then.

If we went a little farther, we might, in some beautiful plain or valley, come to a rich and splendid monastery, where the monks lived, the ministers of the superstitious religion of these times. These monasteries were generally very splendid buildings, for the monks and the nobles possessed all the wealth of the land. Some of these monks were good men, who possessed all the little learning there was in the times, and some of the monasteries had small libraries of written books ; but a great part of them were lazy, fat and idle. Perhaps next, we should come to a town or city, not such as we are accustomed to see, but surrounded with high walls like a castle, with narrow streets and dark gloomy houses, with no fine shops and bustle of trade or commerce, but where everything appeared rude and stern.

When evening came on, if you went back to the castle, and asked for admission for the night, you would be hospitably received, and taken to a great hall in whose chimneys (in early times they even had no chimneys) huge logs would be burning, and where you would see, seated at long rude tables on rough benches, a crowd of the servants and retainers of the lord. At the upper end of the hall, on a floor raised a step above the rest, the lord and his *noble* guests are sitting. You can see on the table great joints of beef, huge pies of venison, and great leather pitchers of ale. And when supper is over, you might see a gaily dressed man step forth, with a harp in his hand, and begin to sing or to repeat a poem. This was one of their chief substitutes for books. These minstrels made or learned long poems, narrating the deeds and adventures of famous knights, or telling of wizards and magicians, of enchanted castles, and dwarfs

and dragons. They wandered from castle to castle, and from monastery to monastery, and were every where welcomed for the sake of their songs. Let us gather with the rest round our musician in the great castle hall, and hear what story he is telling. It is called *Merlin the Magician*.

A long while ago, there was a king in England named Constans. He had a steward named Vortigern, who was an ambitious and wicked man, and who, when his master died, drove his sons, the heirs to the throne, from the country, and took possession of it himself. The tyrant reigned some years, but his subjects hated him for his cruelty, and he lived in continual fear of being killed by them. So he resolved to build on Salisbury Plain the largest, and strongest castle that ever was seen, thinking to make it so strong that he should feel safe to live in it the rest of his days. Accordingly he collected fifteen thousand workmen, (as the story says) and ordered them to build him a castle as strong as possible. They set to work, and by night they had laid the foundation, and built a wall of prodigious thickness breast high. But what was their astonishment, when, on going the next day, they found, in place of their great wall, nothing but heaps of stones and rubbish. They did not know what to make of it, but they set to work and cleared away the rubbish, and built another wall, stronger than the first. But the next morning it had all tumbled down, and there was the heap of rubbish again. They tried again, but with no better success, and then king Vortigern applied to his wise men, and commanded them, on pain of death, to tell him why his wall would not hold together on Salisbury Plain. The wise men consulted the stars, and

then made answer that there was but one way of reme-dying the difficulty—and that was a pretty savage one. They said that there was a boy somewhere in his king-dom whom they described in a particular way, whom he must find, put him to death, and pour his blood on the walls, and then they would stand firm. The king did not do it, as you will soon see. But he sent forth his mes-sengers all over the kingdom to find this strange boy. They sought in every place, but could not find one that answered to the description, till at length two of the messengers happened to meet in a town where some boys were playing in the street. From something one of them said, they knew that it was the one, but as they were drawing their swords to kill him, he ran up to them, told them he knew all about their errand, but that king Vortigern's wise men were great fools, and that all the blood in his body would not keep his wall from tumbling down. But he offered, if they would take him to the king, to tell him what would. So they put him on a little pony and set out. For a great while he did not say a word, but at last, all at once he burst out laughing. The messengers asked him what he was laughing at, and I will give you his answer in the original, as a specimen of the language and poetry of those old times.

Then said Merlin, "See ye naught?
That young man that hath shoon* bought
And strong leather to *do hem clout*†
And grease to smear hem‡ all about,
He weeneth§ to live hem to wear,
But by my soul I dare well swear
His wretched life he shall for-let||
Ere he come to his own gate."

* Shoes. † To patch them. ‡ There. § Thinks. || Lose.

One would think this was no laughing matter, but the prophecy was fulfilled to the astonishment of the messengers, who now found they had a young magician in their charge.

Arrived at the palace, the king takes him to see his refractory castle, and Merlin tells him that there is a very extraordinary cause for its tumbling down—no less than this. He said that below the soil were two deep pools of water, below the water two huge stones, and below the stones two great serpents, one white as milk, and the other red as fire—that these serpents slept all day, but regularly quarrelled every night, and that they fought so hard that it shook the ground so as to knock down the walls. He advised the king to ascertain whether what he said was not true.

The king accordingly sets his fifteen thousand men to digging. They find the pool of water, and then the stones, and having with great labor got these out, there, true enough, are the serpents.

With long tails fele* fold,
And found right as Merlin told,
That one dragon was red as fire,
With bright eyes as basin clear,
His tail was great and nothing small,
His body was a rood withal.
The white dragon lay him by,
Stern of look and griesly;
His mouth and throat yawned wide,
The fire brast† out on ilka‡ side;
His tail was ragged as a fiend,
And upon his tail's end
There was yshaped a griesly head,
To fight with the dragon red.

* Many. † Burst. ‡ Each.

A very extraordinary serpent indeed. Merlin had warned the spectators that the fight would be very terrible, and when it began, they all took to their heels. He stood clapping his hands and shouting at them.

The red dragon and the white,
Hard together gan they smite,
With mouth, paw, and with tail ;
Between him was full hard bataill*
That the earth dinned thro'
And loathly weather wox** thereto ;
So strong fire they casten anon,
That the plains thereof shone,
And sparkled about so bright,
As doth the fire from thunder-light;
So they fought for sooth to say,
All the long summer's day ;
They ne stinted† never of fighting
Till the even-song gan ring ;
The red dragon that was so fell,
Drove the white far adown,
Into the plains a great viroun,‡
Till they came to a valley ;
Then they rested hem both tway,
Well the mountance§ of a while
That a man might gon|| a mile ;
And there the white covered¶ his flight,
And wox** eager for the fight,
And eagerly withouten fail,
The red dragon he gan assail,
And drove the red right again,
Till he came into the plain,

* Battle, † Ceased. ‡ Circuit. § Amount. || Go.
¶ recovered. ** Grew.

And there the white, anon-right,
 Hent* the red with all his might,
 And to the ground he him cast,
 And with the fire of his blast,†
 Altogether brent‡ the red,
 That never of hem was founden shred,
 But dust upon the ground he lay.

The white serpent then disappeared, and no man has ever seen him since.

Merlin then called the wise men before him, and asked them what they meant by saying that his blood was necessary to build the castle? They affirmed very humbly, that they had certainly read it in the stars, and he then explained to them, that his father, a very wicked magician, had put it there, that he might be killed.

He then explained to Vortigern the meaning of the combat, that the red serpent meant Vortigern himself, and the white meant the sons of the old king, who would soon come back, kill him, and take possession of their father's kingdom. Merlin then disappeared, and his prophecy soon came to pass.

If this specimen of the rude old tales which, in the mouths of their minstrels, amused our ancestors, hundreds of years ago, amuses my young readers, I will tell them in some other number, of king Arthur, and his famous sword Escalibore.

W. P. A.

* Seized. † Breath. ‡ Burned.

Do what is right in thine own affair;
 The rest will of itself take care.

THE MOTHER TO HER DYING BABE.

I WILL not keep thee, baby!
Thou mayst go;
I will not weep thee, baby,
Oh no, no!

Thou gavest a heaven to me, baby!
I would not keep back thine,
Thou art not less mine own
In the life divine.

Nearer than ever, baby!
In my soul's core
Life of my very life
Till time be o'er.

And then my blessed guide
To worlds of light
Where love is all the sun,
And no more night.

Then go, my precious one,
Nor longer stay—
Thou'l need no guide to point
Thine *unforgotten* way.

Thoul't come in each still hour
My heart to cheer;
I give thee back to God
Without a tear.

Some gentlest spirit waits
 For thee to come,
To be thy mother then
 In that dear home.

So beautiful even here—
 How radiant there
 My angel-child must be—
 Divinely fair!

And heaven a glory gains
 Though earth be less—
 Now thy sweet form has passed
 Of wondrous loveliness.

That earth *has been* thy home
 Shall make it dear,
 While yet my waiting soul
 Must linger here.

M. F. R.

RUTH BROWN.

"Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

As Mary Harland sate, quietly hemming her doll's apron, by her mother's side, she suddenly stopped ; and, dropping her work on her lap, said, "I cannot imagine, mother, what you meant when you were talking to aunt Harriet the other day about Nurse Brown !"

"Repeat the words which have puzzled you, my daughter, and I will try to explain them to you."

"You had read the verse in Matthew which I learned yesterday, where Jesus says, 'And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life;' and you said what a fine example Nurse was of that."

"I can see," replied Mrs. Farland, observing the expression of perplexity in Mary's countenance as she repeated these words, "that it is very difficult for you to apply these words to our good old nursie."

"Why, yes, mother; I cannot see that they have any thing to do with her at all. She did not forsake house or land, for she died on the same farm, in the same house, where she was born; she never had any brother or wife, or children; her sister went away from *her*; and certainly, if all I have heard is true, she did any thing but forsake her father and mother; then I cannot see how she received a hundred fold; and I thought every body as well as she had everlasting life. Do tell me what it means; for the more I talk and think of it, the more it puzzles me."

"I am not surprised my dear, that you could not reconcile such seeming contradictions; and yet I believe I can show you that these words may be as applicable in our country and in our village, as when they were first uttered with that glowing eloquence, which stirred the hearts of the Galilean fishermen, and induced them to leave all and to follow Jesus, as their master. Peter inquires what recompense they shall have for so doing;

and he, whose words were so divine that they are as true for the world now as they were eighteen hundred years ago, replied in the sentence you have quoted. Now, if it were taken literally, it would not have been true then, for the disciples did not receive again a hundred fold of the worldly goods which they forsook to follow Jesus; but poverty, persecution and an excruciating mode of death were the consequences to them of their noble self-sacrifice. No; that lofty soul could not speak of any thing so mean as a reward for doing what is right; doing right is its own blessed reward; the noble, disinterested action always blesses the actor a hundred fold; it is our Father's appointment that it should be so; and so no right action, done from a right motive, can ever fail of its true recompense. Can you believe that those devoted men, journeying on through suffering and disgrace from land to land, imprisoned, beaten, stoned, cast out of cities, despised and spurned by most of those among whom they went, bearing in their hearts and on their lips all they could apprehend of the life-giving truths uttered by the departed Jesus, their earnest hearts throbbing with intense desire to communicate to others what they had received, can you believe they would have exchanged the thrilling emotions of joy and gratitude, the overflowing peace which filled their hearts in the consciousness of duty well performed, for all the wealth and fame, and pleasure the world had to offer? Their reward spoke ever to them sweetly in their approving conscience, in tones so clear and divine that they heeded not the scoffs of the populace, or the frightful sentences of their judges. It lifted them beyond all fear; till the impetuous Peter, who, with a cowardice and deceit which makes us blush

for him as we read the story, had, even in the hearing of his beloved friend, denied that he was even acquainted with him. This same disciple afterwards chose, as it is related, to be crucified with his head downward, thinking it too great a privilege to meet this torturing death in precisely the same way that his master was executed.

A hundred fold reward they received for truly following out their ideas of duty ; but not in houses and lands. Now we will see how this great truth expressed then, applies at this time to our good nurse ; and to do that I must give you a sketch of her life from childhood."

Mary's eyes brightened as she found her mother was about to tell a story ; for though she had asked for an application of her remark, she thought the answer was rather a long one ; and found herself twisting Pussy's tail in odd shapes, and wondering how her ears would look if they were sewed up, instead of listening so attentively as would have enabled her to explain the sentence afterward. But when she found a real story was to begin, she chided Puss for her unseasonable friskiness, and thought she should be obliged to put her out of the room if she could not be satisfied with playing with her own tail, instead of requiring to be noticed. Drawing her chair as near as possible to her mother's, she kept her work in her hand, but her eyes on the speaker's face, as Mrs. Harland went on relating the little history of a person humble in station, but lofty in character.

" Gilbert Brown was an honest, respectable farmer in this town many years since ; his family consisted of a wife and two daughters, the elder of whom was our good nursie. The father was an industrious man, worked hard summer and winter that he might secure a comfort-

able support for those who were dearest to him, and save money enough to build the little cot, which stands in so picturesque a situation near Lily Pond. There he lived very contentedly for many years, cultivating a few acres which surrounded his lowly dwelling. His two little girls were his recreation and delight; their mirth cheered him; their prattle was pleasanter to him than all the news or politics he could hear among the farmers; and when he laid aside his farming tools at evening he wished nothing better than to sit down on his own doorstep, with Ruth on one knee and Almira on the other, and listen to their stories, or entertain them with his own. They were equally dear to his impartial heart; and the same thrill of pleasure stirred within him whether the blue-eyed, flaxen-haired Almira bounded forward to give the first welcome to his returning steps, or whether her dark-haired sister, older by one year, was the one to greet him. To make them happy was his enjoyment; and they returned his fondness with warm love and obedience.

Their mother was of a different character. She was the daughter of a trader in a neighboring town, and foolishly fancied that she had rather degraded herself by marrying a man, who was obliged to earn his daily bread by hard labor; this idea produced an abiding feeling of discontent; nothing was ever exactly as she thought she would like it; as long as they lived in a hired house, she was urging her husband to build one for themselves; when this was built, she thought it would have been better if of two stories, than merely one; if of four rooms instead of three; wondered she did not think before it was begun how much pleasanter it would have been on the other

side of the pond, though this was the very spot she herself selected. Gilbert bore all these little worryings with great composure ; he saw that no reasoning could change this temper, that she was only moved to tears or anger by any attempt on his part to show her the unreasonableness of her complaints, and that the best way was to let it all pass unnoticed. But there was one thing which did distress him ; with the most unmotherly partiality, she lavished every mark of affection upon the younger daughter, and treated the other with proportioned neglect ; chiding her when not in fault, exaggerating her childish foibles, and complaining of her to her husband and to their friends as a very troublesome child ; though a sweeter, lovelier flower never bloomed in the garden of home than the gentle, affectionate, playful Ruth. The effect of such unnatural treatment upon most children would have been very hurtful, souring the temper, and chilling the affections ; but not so on this little one ; she meekly bore her mother's injustice and unkindness, obeyed her unreasonable commands, and served her faithfully, though she could not respect her. She felt no jealousy of her preferred sister, to whom she was most tenderly attached ; but, repelled from her rightful place in the maternal heart, her springing affections rested with glad confidence in the welcoming shelter of her father's love. His word was her law, his smile her encouragement, and his society dearer to her than that of all the world beside.

Two traits of character, beautiful in themselves and of most beneficial results, appeared in her early childhood, increased with her advancing years, adding constantly to the loveliness and dignity of her character, and making

her the useful, noble person we have loved so much. These were a broad disinterestedness, and a fixedness of resolve in following out what she believed to be her duty. In obedience to the impulses of the first, she considered nothing disagreeable to do, by which she could add to the convenience, comfort, or happiness of any person with whom she associated. This showed itself most sweetly in the home-circle ; but was apparent everywhere. Her schoolmates knew well, that were it necessary for any one to yield her share in any sport in which they engaged, Ruth Brown would be the first to do it ; were there too many for the swing, she preferred to play see-saw, or skipping-rope ; did so many come in to school together in a bitter cold morning that all could not come near the fire, she was quite content to rub her hands warm, and leave the warm place for another ; was something pretty or wonderful to be seen, she preferred waiting till the more impatient had looked at it first ; these, and all similar acts of disinterestedness, were done with so much simplicity and gentleness, in so quiet a way, that she seemed to be doing just the thing most agreeable to herself. And so, in fact, it became. The generous heart, which accustoms itself constantly to lay aside every selfish feeling, to make others' pleasure its own, thrills with an emotion as sweet at the joy which comes to another, as if received by itself.

"Let us go berrying this afternoon," said Sarah Jacobs to a knot of the school-girls, as they walked home one Saturday morning. "Jonas says there are plenty of whortleberries in the field back of the meeeting-house, and they are just ripe ; and then by the pasture back of the mill, the blackberries are thick as they can be."

"Oh yes, yes! let us go," cried at least a dozen voices in joyful response at the prospect of such a fine picking.

"I want to go if Ruth is going," said one little rosy dumpling of five years, "for she always helps me over the fences."

"And may I go too, Ruth?" said another little one of the same age, "I never picked a single berry in all my whole life."

"Yes, Debby," said the ready friend, "you shall go and Hannah too, if your mothers will let you. Run home now, and ask them; and if they say yes, you may both meet us at the prim bush, when you have eaten dinner; and mind to bring your kettles."

"Well now, Ruth, I should think you were a goose," said Desire Barnes, a girl of her own age, not particularly beloved by the other girls, though she thought herself very generous, because she often gave away things which she did not wish herself, and made presents to those who had done the same to her, or from whom she expected them in return.

"Why so?" said Ruth.

"Why don't you see we shall have those little plagues to take care of the whole afternoon, instead of amusing ourselves?"

"Oh, I think not," replied she; "they will be as much pleased as any of us with the gathering, even if they only get a very few; and you know the poor little things have no one to carry them to such a place."

"Then they ought to be content to stay at home, and not break up our pleasure; for we shall have nothing to do but wait on them."

The other girls exchanged glances, which implied that they did not think Desire would do much of the waiting upon them. They parted, agreeing to meet at the prim bush at one o'clock.

Mrs. Brown thought it rather foolish for Ruth to go and spend a whole afternoon in berrying, for she seldom did any thing to forward her pleasures ; but as Almira was going too, and she knew Ruth would take excellent care of her, she consented. They went off as agreed ; tin kettles, quart measures, coffee pots, &c. glittering, as the young party moved on under the bright, hot sun of a July afternoon ; light baskets swinging in their hands, and light hearts beating in their breasts. Little Debby and Hannah trudged on as fast as the rest, keeping close to Ruth ; for their mothers had told them they would be safe with her. When they came to the pasture near the mill, they found the blackberry-bushes very numerous to be sure, but scarcely a berry upon them.

"This is too bad," said Desire ; "I wonder who has been here, carrying off the berries that we expected ; I feel really provoked to think we did not get here first."

"But perhaps it was somebody that needed them more than we do," said Ruth.

The sounds of discontent which were about to be uttered by the other girls ceased at this suggestion ; and then Sarah Jacobs reminded them that they had seen Rhoda Low walking towards her home with a huge, heavy basket on her arm, and perhaps she had been picking them.

"What a piggie she must be to take so many !" said one of the disappointed party.

"Oh ! do not say so of her," said Ruth; "if you knew as much about Rhoda as I do, you would be glad that she should have them instead of us. Now that her grandfather has grown so blind, he is almost helpless ; so that he and the poor paralytic grandmother are dependent on what Rhoda can earn, while she takes care of them. I dare say before she goes to bed to-night she will have walked many a long, long mile to sell her berries, and bring home some comforts for the old people, whom she tends so carefully."

"If we go to the field by the meeting-house, perhaps we [may find some whortleberries," said another ; and with fresh alacrity they started off in that direction.

"What has become of Ruth?" said Sarah, when they reached the field and found plenty of berries, ripe for the picking. "She is not apt to be the last."

"You forget," replied Desire, "that she has brought those two children, and I knew they would be a plague to us all the afternoon."

"Not much to us," said Olive King, in a tone so significant that the girls began to pick the berries, lest Desire might see their smiles."

"Ah ! here she comes," said Almira ; "why, Ruth, what has kept you behind so long ? we began to think you were lost."

"Not lost," replied she with a laugh, "while I had these two little children with me ; their merry voices were as good as a bell tied to a cow ; I might have been traced by their laugh."

"All the girls would have laughed too if they had been there ;" said little Debby ; "I was not tired with walking, but my shoes ached a little ; and when I told

Ruth, she made me ride pick-a-back on her, about as far as from our door to the cow-yard, and then she set me down on a stone, and took up Hannah in the same way to another stone, and then came back again for me ; and so we have come ever so far ; and now we feel all rested.”

“ All but Ruth,” added Sarah ; “ only see how warm she looks.”

“ I cannot imagine,” said Desire, “ what is the use of wearing one’s self to death for people that have no claim upon you.”

The afternoon was happily past among the bushes, and many a quart of shining blackberries filled the baskets, kettles, &c. There was enough for all ; but the little ones, who could not pick fast, applied, not in vain, to their good friend to help them. They set off homeward, exulting in their rich booty. All had turned away to their separate homes, one girl only being in company with Ruth. In crossing a plank over a stream, this girl’s foot stumbled, and away went her basket into the brook ; she took it up again ; but it had been so completely overturned, that not a single one of all her bright black treasures remained to her. She looked extremely disappointed ; Ruth saw the tears in her eyes, and said, “ You shall have part of mine, Abby.”

“ Oh ! I do not care for them myself,” said her companion, “ but I thought they would please mother. She has such a cough that she scarcely eats any thing ; but she said she thought she should like some of my berries.”

“ You shall have all mine,” replied Ruth ; “ I do not wish them myself, and Almira has some for father and

mother." Abby was unwilling to take the small portion, which her friend had secured for herself after helping the little ones ; but the sweet girl pressed it upon her acceptance with such true courtesy, and appeared so unaffectedly pleased at having an opportunity to give any pleasure to the invalid, that a refusal would have been unkind. So with a heart and a basket as light as when she left home, she returned to it.

The mother reproached her with disregard for the pleasure of those at home, in thus passing a whole afternoon among the berry bushes, and returning without one to place upon the table. Ruth's heart was pierced by the accusation, and tears sprung to her eyes as she felt its deep injustice ; it was hard for her to free herself from the unmerited blame, by telling of her own true generosity, to the little ones and Abby's invalid mother ; she was saved the pain of doing so by Almira's return to the room, bringing her dish of berries, shining from the fresh water bath she had given them.

"Come Ruth," said she, "you look so heated and tired, I will pour water over your berries for you, and we will have a good supper of our own saving. But where are they ? Your basket is all empty."

Ruth hemmed to clear the swelling of suppressed grief from her throat, excited by her mother's unkind remark, and Mrs. Brown added,

"Ruth finds it pleasanter to eat while she gathers." "No, indeed, mother," said Almira, "she did no such thing ; she picked more than any girl there, and I do not remember seeing her eat one ; but she was continually dropping them into the little children's baskets. What did you do, Ruth, with what you kept for yourself ? I

dare say you have given them to somebody, that you thought wanted them." Before she could reply, her father, putting his head in at the door, said, "Will Ruth bring me a pail of water from the spring, and I will thank her for it as much as Abby Nute's mother asked me to thank her for her present of whortleberries? I stopped to see the poor sufferer as I came along, and she was picking them from a saucer with a pin, and said she had relished nothing so much for a long time."

"Well, I am glad you made a good use of them," murmured Mrs. Brown, more than half ashamed of her injustice, while Ruth's heart leaped with delight at finding she had comforted, even so slightly, one pining in a wearisome illness.

While this lovely girl instinctively obeyed those disinterested impulses, seeming to have no wish which she could not yield gladly to that of others, she never suffered her generosity to interfere with the performance of what she considered to be right. Filial obedience was an active principle with her; no pleasure could be greater to her than to fulfil her father's most slightly expressed desire; her action answered to his known will, as readily as the opening wild-flower to the soft breath of spring. She could not feel for the mother who treated her so unkindly, the affectionate respect which she did for him; but she knew it was her duty to obey her, and she did so.

When the frosty nights of autumn had prepared the nut-trees for young visitors, Mrs. Brown despatched Ruth with a basket to join a nutting party. She gave her many injunctions as to what kind she was to gather, and charged her to bring all the walnuts she could find as she wished them for pickling.

As the party of girls were walking homeward after the gathering, they paused on a bank by the road-side, and sat down to rest themselves ; for the woody fruit was a heavy burden for young arms. They opened their several baskets, and examined their treasures ; hazel nuts, chestnuts, walnuts ; some thought how their little brothers would be pleased with a pocketfull of rattling fruit ; some agreed to meet together the next day at Willow Brook to crack them ; and each had a plan for distribution or saving.

"Who'll agree to do this ?" said Sarah Jacobs ; "I heard Rhoda Low say yesterday that the Doctor's wife had engaged her to pick to-day eight quarts of walnuts for her to pickle ; and she was to receive a good price for them ; but she did not want less than that quantity. Now her grandmother has been so ill for some days that she has not been able to go nutting, and probably cannot get them. Suppose we put them all together from our baskets and give them to her ?"

"That's right," said some voices ; while some fingers grasped their baskets rather more tightly than before, unwilling to part with their property.

"Let us count out," said Sarah, "into one large basket and use one of the quart measures to try how much we have." Basket after basket was offered for the purpose, till all were emptied of walnuts, except Desire's and Ruth's.

"Here are mine," said the former ; "I am very glad to give them to Rhoda : for I should like to help her if she is in trouble ; look at these, Sarah, they are the largest I ever saw ; real beauties ! she may have them *all*," added she very emphatically.

"It is lucky you can give them to Rhoda, is it not," said little Debby, "for you know you said in the woods that you did not wish them, they are so hard to crack."

"There are six quarts," said Sarah, pouring in the last of Desire's to the basket for Rhoda; "and now two quarts more; all are emptied, except Ruth's, and she has just about enough to make up the eight quarts;" reaching over as she spoke to draw the basket towards her.

A struggle had been going on in Ruth's mind, between her disinterested desire to help Rhoda, and her obedience to her mother's express order. She saw that without her assistance the kind intention of the whole party would be prostrated; for there must be eight quarts, and she must have them to-day; her impulse would have been to have given the whole, unreservedly, to one who needed it more than herself, and she would have found unfeigned pleasure in doing so; but then her mother's order—that was decisive.

"No," said she, in a firm but gentle tone, "I cannot give you one of mine."

"Why Ruth!" said all the voices at once.

"If it were any body but you," said Sarah, "we should say that was pretty stingy."

Ruth felt that it appeared so, but the blush that mantled her sun-burnt cheek, was the expression of conscious innocence, not of shame. She knew that the girls were aware of her mother's unkindness towards her; and as she could not bear to expose her parent to their censure, she restrained from clearing herself from the appearance of wrong, by giving the reason of her refusal.

"No, indeed," exclaimed Abby energetically, "Ruth never did a stingy thing in her whole life; I don't believe

she knows what the word means. She has some good reason for refusing." The first emotion of surprise over, the rest assented to this declaration ; and tried to suppress any expression of disappointment as they divided again the gathered, insufficient walnuts. Their homeward walk was less merry than before ; but each expressed to Ruth in parting, their belief that she must have done right, though they could not see how.

The tears filled her eyes at this unanimous expression of their confidence in her, even while they could not see her motive ; a confidence won by their knowledge of her unfailing disinterestedness. She ran home with great rapidity as soon as they had separated, and stated the case to her mother, with some hope that she might allow her to fulfil the girls' wishes ; but Mrs. Brown would not listen to it, declaring that "Charity begins at home." When Ruth found it could not be, she acceded to her mother's will with as much sweetness and alacrity as if her request had been granted ; neither sullen, nor in tears, because she was prevented from doing good to another. Obedience was then her duty, and conscience whispered its sweet approval, when duty was fulfilled.

H. E. S.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

GAMES OF THE ANCIENT GREEKS AND ROMANS.

THE games of the ancients were mostly of a nature which tended to strengthen the body, and render it fit for active and invigorating duty. Thus we find that the Romans, who were always remarkable for their great bravery in battle,

while at home, and not on military duty, amused themselves with sports which rendered their bodies active, and ready for the most dangerous feats of war. The same may be observed of the Spartans, who vied with each other in being able to bear the greatest number of stripes, and other kinds of severe corporal discipline, which hardened their bodies to such a degree that when in the field they suffered all kinds of dangers and privations without murmuring. But though most of their games were of an invigorating nature, it was not always so ; the ancient Romans had sports like our backgammon, draughts, playing with dice, &c., which served to fill up the time they had to spare from more strengthening duties. However, in the following observations on some of the principal games of the ancients, the gymnastics and other kinds of bodily exercises will be observed to preponderate. I shall in the following account, taken principally from the Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities, give a slight description of the games of the ancient Greeks and Romans set forth in an alphabetical order.

Abacus—This game was something like our backgammon, and is one of those mentioned above as not tending to strengthen the body by corporal labor but rather to amuse the players when from excessive toil they were become weary. A board (*abacus,*) was used with counters placed on successive lines or spaces of it, and dice were thrown for the moves, which were regulated by the number which was on the uppermost face of the die.

Alea—Gaming, or playing for any game of chance, bore the name of *alea*, and the player was called *aleator*. Gaming was strictly forbidden by the Roman laws, as tending to enervate the body, and rendering it unfit for

more active and vigorous duties ; the law does not seem however to have been much attended to, and it was permitted to be played in the month of December, which was a time of general relaxation. *Alea* sometimes signified the implement played with in a game of chance.

Buxum—A top, or literally a piece of boxwood, and it obtained the meaning of top because tops were made of boxwood, the best of which came from Paphlagonia. It is not known whether the tops in use amongst the ancients were of either of the sorts denominated by the modern boys, whip-tops, peg-tops, or humming-tops ; but I think it was the first of the three classes, because there is the expression in Perseus “ to turn a top with the lash.” Many wind instruments, as well as tops, were made of boxwood.

Cestus—This word signified the bands or thongs with which the hands of the boxers were bound, in order to render their blows more powerful ; they were usually wrapped round the arms as high as the elbow. In later times the *cestus* was loaded with iron or lead, so as to render it a most formidable weapon, as we see from the Greek name, which being translated means “ *limb-breakers* ;” a name which gives us no very agreeable feeling in their favor : indeed Lucretius speaks of a boxer whose head had been so battered with these instruments as to resemble a sieve. Playing with the *cestus* was a game much in vogue amongst the ancients, and was decidedly one of those which had for its object the strengthening of the body, and though it was a dangerous weapon when improperly used, it might, like our boxing-gloves, be used in sport without any injury to the players.

“ Gatherings by Young Hands.”

"I believe my dying words will be, "Take off the chains!"—
Letters from New York.

I saw a child—his lightsome glee,
Like sunshine through a valley cast,
In beauty beamed around his home ;
But while I gazed the light had passed.

Facts, like strong mountains on his way,
Hinder'd sweet hope ;—and fears and pains
Urged him still on—no more a child,
Starting, he cried, "Take off the chains!"

I saw a felon in his cell.
Strong iron bound him to the stone ;
The iron silence on his soul
More deeply fell—he was alone !

He slept, and fancy-free was led
O'er woodlands wide, through shady lanes ;
Earth to his feet—the heavens above—
He woke, and cursed—"Take off the chains!"

I saw the slave—his was the toil
Remitted at another's will ;
Yet blithely, he the harvest sow'd,
Which should another's garners fill.

But in his hand th' oppressor's rod
Shall bud, and bear its fruit of pains ;
When, in one pulse, the earth's great voice
Shall cry to heav'n, "Take off the chains!"

I saw the sinner :—in the light
Of truth he stands ; and strains,
And writhes, while, with unuttered tone,
The cry goes up, "Take off the chains!"

I saw the Christian nigh to death !
Not here, a "monarch dread" he reigns :
A serving friend—he lifts the clay—
The spirit soars without its chains.

S.